

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A method of coating a product, carried on a surface of a delivery mechanism, with a coating substance, the method comprising:

delivering the coating substance to a location above said surface carrying said product via an inclined chute down which the coating substance falls under gravity;

allowing the coating substance to fall under gravity in the direction of said surface from the end of the inclined chute;

during its fall under gravity, and substantially immediately beneath the exit end of said inclined chute, subjecting the coating substance to at least one pressurized gas stream delivered by a gas jet nozzle, whereby the falling coating substance is dispersed, and to an electric field generated by an electrode attached to or located adjacent to said nozzle, whereby the coating substance is charged.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 and comprising vibrating or shaking the chute to disperse the coating substance and to aid transfer of the substance along the chute.

3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the pressurized gas stream is subjected to said electric field prior to impinging upon the coating substance.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the pressurized gas stream impinges upon the coating substance prior to subjection to said electric field.

5. (Previously Presented) Apparatus for coating a product, carried on a surface of a delivery mechanism, with a coating substance, the apparatus comprising:

an inclined chute for conveying the coating substance to a location above said surface carrying said product, an exit end of the chute being suitable for sitting above said surface;

a gas jet nozzle located substantially immediately beneath the exit end of the chute;

an electrode attached to or located adjacent to said nozzle;

a source of pressurized gas coupled to said gas jet nozzle; and

high voltage charging circuit for charging said electrode;

wherein in use gas ejected from said nozzle passes over said electrode and is charged, and impinges on the coating substance falling from the exit end of the chute.

6. (Currently Amended) Apparatus according to claim 5 and comprising a motor for vibrating or shaking the chute.

7. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 5 or 6, wherein in use the gas ejected from said nozzle passes over said electrode prior to impinging upon the coating substance.

8. (Previously Presented) Apparatus according to claim 5, wherein in use the gas ejected from said nozzle impinges upon the coating substance prior to passing over said electrode.

9 – 12. (Cancelled)